



# THE EASTERN IOWA DX'ER

FALL 1996

CLUB NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTERN IOWA DX ASSOCIATION

## 1996 EIDXA Officers

President: W0SR Jim Spencer  
V. Pres: W8BZRL Tom Vavra  
Sec/Tres: K0GT Gary Toomsen

Repeater Committee:  
K0VM Al Groff  
W0MJN Joe Finkstein

Membership Committee:  
W0SR Jim Spencer  
W0IZ Dale Repp

EIDXA Repeater:  
145.190 W0MJN

DX Cluster:  
147.51 W8BZRL  
144.91 223.40  
CR NetRom Freqs

## ====> EIDXA MEETING NOTICE <====

Date: 18th of October 1996 (Friday)

Time: 7:30 pm (door open at 6:30)

Place: Room 219C  
Linn Hall  
Kirkwood Community College  
Cedar Rapids

Agenda: Business meeting. To  
include the election of  
officers for 1997. The  
program still not set.  
And as usual, a QSY to  
the local pizza parlor.

Plan on attending!!

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The October meeting is also the time when club officers for the next year are elected. There are three officers: President; Vice President; and Secretary/Treasurer. A slate of candidates for these offices will be presented by the nominating committee (the current officers). In addition, nominations may be made from the floor. However, the chair will accept these nominations ONLY if the nominee accepts. Voting will be by secret ballot.

The October meeting is also the meeting when DUES are DUE. Dues for 1997 are still only \$5.00 which is less than we spend for a couple of QSL cards. The By-laws specify that members pay their dues by the January meeting. You may pay your dues to the Secretary/Treasurer at the October or January meeting, or by check to his home address.

The October QST contained a DXCC 2000 Preliminary Survey Form. It has been reproduced in this newsletter. The reverse side is pre-addressed so you can remove the page from the newsletter, check the boxes, fold and tape the fold, add a 32 cent stamp and mail your response. No excuse now for not responding to the survey.

A STRONG Case for Safety wires on Guys  
de AA7NO

Last night, August 14, hams in Glendale, AZ, a suburb of Phoenix, were surprised to receive up to 115 mph winds in a very short time frame!

Here is a list of the towers and antenna systems within a 3 square mile area, how they were affected, and what in the future could be done to make the survival rate better.

contester #1....

Rohn 25g at 100' with stacked beams on 40m, 20, 10m mast pipe bent at 45 degree angle, great for moonbounce, all to come down and replace mast pipe. 3 sets of 3/16" rohn guy wire. Top and bottom set tension okay, middle set at 60' were EXTREMELY loose, maybe 3' sag in the middle? One 12" turnbuckle was 2 threads from becoming completely undone on the middle set. Needed to have safety wire per Rohn installed.

Rohn 25g 68' foldover tower... with 4 el quad on 30' boom about 6' above the top of tower. Mast pipe did NOT bend, however the Tailtwister did actually BREAK in two!! No Joke! the clamps were still on the mast pipe, now at a 30 degree angle, the gear portion of the rotor still mounted to the accessory shelf! Amazing!!

Cure? maybe another accessory shelf above the rotor.... the top section is a flat plate with a thrust bearing, but not enough room to mount a second thrust bearing above the rotor. Guy wires okay on this tower although still needed safety wire on turnbuckles.

Contester #2

70' Rohn 25G with 2 el HyGain 40m antenna and Mosley TA- 36 slight twisting of the HyGain elements, the driven elements slightly bent. Remember these were 100+ mph winds... Elevated Guy post bent about 15 degrees, no back stay for this post. Taking up slack today in the top set of 2 guy wires, noticed that the guy wire was almost flat, each strand, rather than the usual round 7 strand stuff. Asked the owner, "what is the make of this guy wire?" he said, "It's regular Rohn stuff"!! I looked further up the guy wire (from the turn buckle at the elevated guy) and by golly, it WAS regular Rohn 3/16" guy wire!!! The stuff had actually STRETCHED and was now almost 3/32" guy wire, flat!! AMAZING! In my 25 years of putting up Rohn tower I have never seen this. Kudos to the Engineer who the owner had hired to do the specs on this tower! Remember, this was 115 mph (measured) winds! and it survived the storm!!

However, when we went to temporarily tighten up this top set of guy wires, it must have twisted the wire over 20 turns, no kidding, as the guy wire went round and round before it would stop! Again, not safety wire was installed! Owner says it will be this time though!

contester #3

Heights 55' crank-up tower with Th-6, Cushcraft 3el WARC beam, Cushcraft 2 el 40 m and 2m antenna on top. Cranked down to about 45'. Tower collapsed at base, fell over block fence with much damage and onto the street. Every antenna lost and of course the tower way beyond repair.

In the Future, every guyed tower MUST have the safety wire on ALL the turnbuckles, we must follow the manufactures instructions to the letter!!

PacketCluster  
de WB0ZRL

I have added a data base to the cluster that gives grey line possibilities for the current day. SH/GREY is the command. I currently have the window set at fifteen minutes, so only where our sunrise/sunset times match distant times within 15 minutes, will there be an entry in the screen. I've noted some logic problems when our sunset is within a few minutes of 00Z, but those only happen for a few days around the equinox.

John, K0RW, has put a PacketCluster node on the air in the Burlington area. John is currently on 144.910 using the call G3WJN-4 (alias RWDX). If/when VE3CDX delivers the new software, John will change the call to his own.

We have been linked into the Chicago area by going through the Quad Cities (G3JWN node) to Sterling (N4RR node) to Roscoe (KA9LTR node). Roger, N4RR, is about to move from Sterling to Rock Falls. He took the cluster node off the air on October 1st, and we have now lost the link through Sterling. Rich, G3WJN, has several possibilities in mind to provide a link all the way to Roscoe, but nothing is firm yet.

The contest season starts in a few weeks with the CQWW SSB test. These weekends can cram 4000+ spots into those 48 hours. K0VM reported that last year the cluster was sending 100 Kbytes per hour into the Cedar Rapids LAN during the CQWW SSB contest. Each user can help minimize the congestion by limiting their use of the mail/golist/bulletins/etc during the contest. If you really want all those spots, fine, but please don't get them just to hear your terminal beep. I will explain the use of FILTERS as often as necessary, so ask if you need to.

The October QST had a brief reference to the Ely cluster node. Did you see it?

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Grade LE Phenolic Insulators  
de W3LPL

For many years I've been using Grade LE phenolic plates in outdoor antenna applications, and many of these materials have been exposed to the weather continuously for over 25 years! Grade LE phenolic is readily available, moderately priced (comparable to aluminum of the same size), and has excellent electrical insulation and mechanical strength properties.

For example, I use Grade LE phenolic plates to mount Yagi elements on their supporting booms. I fabricated the 12" x 12" x 1" Grade LE plates that support the full size elements of my three element 40M beams in 1971, and one such antenna is still functioning well on top of a 200 foot tower. The last time I looked at these plates, they were somewhat discolored (still brown, but a lighter brown than 25 years ago), and there is no evidence of delamination or structural weakening. I recently had an occasion to drill a hole in one of these 25 year outdoor-exposed plates, and -- believe me -- it was as tough as ever! The same can be said of the 1/2 inch thick Grade LE mounting plates I use on my 20, 15 and 10 meter monoband Yagis.

Grade LE phenolic is readily available in sheet, rod and tube shapes from McMaster-Carr Supply Company, under the trade name "Barolite." McMaster Carr's phone number is 908-329-3200 (M-F 0700-2100 Eastern Time).

Grade LE Phenolic Insulators (continued)

Approximate prices for just a small sampling of the Grade LE phenolic shapes available from McMaster-Carr:

12" x 12" x 3/8" sheet	\$25	Catalog # 8525K616
12" x 12" x 1/2" sheet	\$30	8525K618
12" x 12" x 1" sheet	\$55	8525K623
1/2" dia x 72" rod	\$20	8526K57
3/4" i.d. x .25" wall tube	\$38	8640K261

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Dits and Dahs

W0SR - Jim was overheard (on the repeater) the other morning giving advice to a fellow motorist. How was that again Jim??

WB0ZRL - It takes real dedication to sing in his church choir. A recurring theme of an anthem they are now preparing goes: "O the Lord of hosts will come and every tower will fall down."

AD0F (ex NB2N) - Rick is trying one more time to get a good call. GL

WB0ZKG - Chuck is only rarely heard on the repeater. Perhaps he is afraid of slipping into the bad habits he undoubtedly picked up this summer by only having an 11M radio in his truck.

W0MJN - Joe is finally back on HF. Ask him how his antenna switch blew out the driver transistors of several transceivers.

K0VZR - Grandpa QSYed to North Dakota again to see his new grandson.

K0GT - Gary is sporting a new tower that has been there for years. Huh??

NR0X - Heinz will soon be the 40M point man in this part of Iowa. A 3 ele yagi at 120' will be the reason.

KU0A - After years of fighting the pileups with a vertical, Nelson now has a TH-11 at 55 feet. And already the log is being filled with good DX.

KK9W - Dave got his tower up too, trying to get ahead of the tower restrictions now being discussed in Johnson County.

W0EJ - Wade is chasing down antenna problems that may still be the results of that last lightning hit.

W0IZ - Like most of us, Dale had to send in his yearly DXCC update before the mailman got all the cards to him.

N0YVY - Steve is spending no small amount of time answering technical questions on the tower reflector. A tower this year Steve??

K0VM - The area repeaters and packet network are running so well that Al has found time to experiment with 56KB packet.

WD0AWL - Terry reports that the Peoria hamfest was not quite the same as last year, and hopes it will return to the old standard next year.

KE0MO - Its the time of year when Tom saddles up the combine for the harvest. Be careful and wishes for bountiful harvest.

Below is the text of the memo from the First Vice President of the ARRL to the ARRL Board of Directors. Steve is next in line to the President, Rodney Stafford, KB6ZV.

"From: Stephen Mendelsohn / MCI ID: 253-2026  
TO: Directors  
Subject: The Coming Storm...or Opportunity

Recent Indications of Change. An Opportunity to Win or Lose.

In recent communications, several Board members have touched on individual signs of what I believe is a greater truth.

An examination of several seemingly disparate signs seems to show that they are really parts of a whole picture which, when blended together, will form a negative picture of the future, for ARRL and Amateur Radio, if not watched and managed. These points include:

- Growing numbers of No-Code Licensees who are content to enjoy VHF operation with no desire to upgrade to HF operation and HF culture including DXing, Contesting and working for personal achievements (WAS, DXCC, etc).
- The recent definition by the Board that the core membership of the League is an HF operator.
- The slowing in the numbers of amateurs who choose to upgrade.
- The declining numbers of ARRL membership renewals.
- The growing perception among VHF licensees who believe that ARRL is becoming irrelevant.

Several other factors seem to be coming into focus that will put increased pressure on our license structure and requirements in the future. These factors include:

- The probable decision at WARC-99 to eliminate the demonstrated knowledge of Morse Code as an international licensing requirement for operation below 30 MHz.
- The realization by a growing number of Code-Free licensees that they will become the majority by 1999.

I believe that these factors will put enormous pressure on the FCC to finally lower or eliminate the code requirement for HF operation.

If the League's core membership is the existing HF operator, that group will be a small minority by 1999 if current licensing and low upgrade trends continue.

The immediate question I believe that this Board must face is how to manage the coming debate so that the League is seen as a Leader in the search for fair solutions.

Remember the rancor left after Incentive Licensing? I would rather not see the League suffer this type of disgrace again.

As I stated at the beginning of this editorial, some Board members have commented on the coming event.



Rod Stafford briefly discussed this in his recent report to the Board (Stafford 2-96). Tom Comstock noted that the market is moving and we are not moving with it. Dave Sumner's editorial in the Feb 96, QST, is another piece of the puzzle. But we, as a Board, must act quickly to face the challenge of the quickly looming future.

I believe we need to start a national debate focusing on the desires of the Amateur population for their future HF usage. We need to create the perception, based on fact, that the League is the National leader in determining what ALL amateurs want in the way of HF spectrum usage and how they really feel about the continued use of the Morse Code as a licensing requirement.

Recent talks before several clubs with a total attendance of over 400 people indicated that a reduction in the code requirement for the General Class license would be acceptable to over 75%. At my cabinet meeting this past weekend the majority felt that if the League were to survive we will need to bring the VHF No-Code licensee into our core by making upgrading to General and above more attractive.

Attractive does not mean more contests or certificates, but a slower code requirement with a written test more responsive to the needs of today's operating skills than ever before.

While there will be some die-hards who state that "I had to do it so they should have to know code at 13/20 WPM" you have merely to ask them if they know how to crank a car engine as their fathers did to pass a driving test and they quickly come to see the point. They don't like it, but they do acknowledge that times and test requirements do change.

I also believe that we will have to reach out to other non-traditional (for the League) sectors to help focus this debate. This may include a group from industry as we had in the previous Code-Free license formulations.

We will have to take special care to talk with our members. Not just write an article or two about what the Board has in mind, but some traditional polling, the creation of focus groups and some grass-roots work by the elected officials.

I will offer a motion to create such a steering group, or to use the EC as a steering group at the coming meeting.

I believe that we must be seen as the leaders in this debate and that we must not be perceived as the "Morse Code Forever" crowd, or we will become the membership organization of less than 10% of the future Amateur population.

The elimination of an international requirement for a knowledge of Morse Code can be used domestically as a way to change the image of the League among what is quickly becoming the majority population of the Service.

Such a change will be an opportunity to win or lose for ARRL. Let's make a League vision of the future the one all amateurs want to sign on to.

I look forward to seeing you and discussing this in Savannah.

Romeo, Romeo, wherefore.....

KØSR received the following explanation from the DXCC desk for rejection of his 9H3UP QSL:

"9H3UP, 'Roy Rogers', is actually Romeo Stepanenko. He does have a house in Malta, and resides there part time. However, there is no guarantee that he was there when worked him, as he has been known to use any call from anywhere.

Romeo Stepanenko was disqualified from DXCC earlier this year. This includes not only his operations from anywhere, but also his ability to serve as a QSL manager.

This has come to our attention only recently, and we will be correcting records."

This letter was signed by Bill Kennamer, K5FUV.

73/Good (vs bad?) DX,

NØBG

As an aside, if you look at the "Ro" in the signature Roy Rogers, you will see a REMARKABLE similarity with the "Ro" of Romeo as signed on some of his earlier cards! I asked a W5 oilfield friend of mine who spends more than 50% of his time in Russia if Romeo was part of the Russian mafia. The answer - No, he's on the run from them.

73, John, NT5C.

**NORTH KOREA...**  
IT'S ANYWHERE YOU WANT IT TO BE!  
**P5/RØMEO**

CONFIRMING PIRATE QSO WITH	DATE			UTC	MHz	RST	MODE 2-WAY
	DAY	MONTH	YEAR				

☐ TNX QSL & GREENSTAMPS

QSL DIRECT ONLY!

ROMEO STUFFURBUCKO  
Box P7RS5  
North Korea, Europe, Asia, Mid East



QTH★

QTH★

ZONE 24

TOM VAVRA      WB8ZRL  
682 Palisades Access Rd.  
Ely, Iowa      52227-9717



1996  
52227

Jim Spencer W0SR  
3712 Tanager Dr. NE  
Cedar Rapids, Ia 52402

### CONTEST CALENDAR

#### October, 1996

VK/ZL/Oceania Contest, Phone	1000Z, Oct 5 to 1000Z, Oct 6
EU Autumn Sprint, SSB	1500Z-1859Z, Oct 5
California QSO Party	1600Z, Oct 5 to 2200Z, Oct 6
R0SB 21/28 MHz Contest, SSB	0700Z-1900Z, Oct 6
VK/ZL/Oceania Contest, CW	1000Z, Oct 12 to 1000Z, Oct 13
Asia-Pacific Sprint	1230Z-1430Z, Oct 12
EU Autumn Sprint, CW	1500Z-1859Z, Oct 12
Pennsylvania QSO Party	1600Z-2400Z, Oct 12 and 0000Z-0500Z and 1300Z-2200Z, Oct 13
JARTS WW RTTY Contest	0000Z, Oct 19 to 2400Z, Oct 20
Worked All Germany Contest	1600Z, Oct 19 to 1600Z, Oct 20
R0SB 21/28 MHz Contest, CW	0700Z-1900Z, Oct 20
CQ Worldwide Contest, Phone	0000Z, Oct 26 to 2400Z, Oct 27

#### November, 1996 (U.S hams should note that CQWW is before Thanksgiving)

ARRL Sweepstakes, CW	2100Z, Nov 2 to 0300Z, Nov 4
High Speed Club CW Contest	0900-1100Z and 1500-1700Z, Nov 3
Japan Int.DX Contest, Phone	2300Z, Nov 8 to 2300Z, Nov 10
WAE DX Contest, RTTY	0000Z, Nov 9 to 2400Z, Nov 10
ARRL Sweepstakes, Phone	2100Z, Nov 16 to 0300Z, Nov 18
R0SB 1.8 MHz Contest, CW	2100Z, Nov 16 to 0100Z, Nov 17
CQ Worldwide Contest, CW	0000Z, Nov 23 to 2400Z, Nov 24

#### December, 1996

ARRL 160-Meter Contest	2200Z, Dec 6 to 1600Z, Dec 8
ARRL 10-Meter Contest	0000Z, Dec 14 to 2400Z, Dec 15
TARA RTTY Sprint	2100Z, Dec 14 to 0100Z, Dec 15
RAC Canada Winter Contest	0000-2359Z, Dec 29